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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PINR NP IN

SUBJECT: HINDU RIGHT WING PLANNING AN ANTI-MAOIST COALITION
IN NEPAL?

REF: A. NEW DELHI 1424

1B. NEW DELHI 1918

Classified By: PolCouns Ted Osius for Reasons 1.4 (B,D)

Koirala to Join an Anti-Maoist Coalition?

11. (C) Former Commerce, Law and Justice Minister Dr. Subramanian Swamy, President of the Janata Party, told DepPolCouns April 23 that he is headed to Nepal April 26 to meet "secretly" with King Gyanendra and publicly with Prime Minister Koirala, whom he described as "an old friend." Swamy was a member of the BJP-precursor Bharatiya Jan Sangh party until he started his own Janata Party in 1977, and has continued his involvement with the Hindu right's Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sang (RSS) organizations. Swamy, who is decidedly anti-Left, indicated that he hopes to foment an anti-Maoist coalition in Nepal with PM Koirala, the VHP, the RSS and the Madhesis (Note: Ethnic Indians from Nepal's violence-ridden southern Terai region, who have been protesting for civil rights and inclusive representation in the Nepalese government. End note.) Noting that the VHP was in support of retaining King Gyanendra, while the RSS supported the concept of monarchy, but not necessarily the present king, Swamy professed that Madhesi activism in the Terai in recent months had been supported by royalists from the two organizations. Swamy, who as a former member of Parliament is well-connected with the Indian government and was scheduled to meet with Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee the same day, observed that the government of India (GOI) had no interest in a Nepal run by Maoists, conjecturing that India's own Naxalite Maoist problem would only be exacerbated if Nepalese Maoists came into political power. Swamy suggested that United Progressive Alliance policy toward the Maoists in Nepal had been unduly soft due to its desire to please its own Communist and leftist constituents.

Swamy's Royal Connections

12. (C) Comment: While Swamy's statements should be taken with a grain of salt, it is not unlikely that he actually will meet with both King Gyanendra and PM Koirala, given his

political background. Swamy not only claims to be on friendly terms with Koirala, but suggested that he and the Nepalese royal family have a special relationship, and that he had been given special protection by King Birendra during the Emergency in 1978, and met Birendra again in 1990, during another crisis in Nepal. Given recent allegations that the RSS and BJP have been involved in the Madhesi uprising (see reftels), there could be truth to Swamy's claim that the movement was not entirely indigenous. End comment.

Biographic Data

¶3. (SBU) Subramanian Swamy was born September 15, 1939 to Aiyar Brahmin parents in Tamil Nadu. He holds a Master's degree in Statistics from the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata, and earned a doctorate in Economics from Harvard in 1964. Swamy was a professor at Harvard from 1963-1969, and from 1969-1991 at the Indian Institute of Technology in New Delhi. He has been an economist with the United Nations, a consultant to the World Bank and was Union Minister for Commerce, Law and Justice in 1991. Swamy floated into politics through the Bharatiya Jan Sangh party in the early 1970's and switched over to the Janata Party when it was formed in 1977. He is the only person of any significance left in the party, whose other prominent leaders have all dispersed into various other political formations. Swamy has been personally critical of former Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and Congress President Sonia Gandhi. Known for his vehement anti-Communist views, Swamy's detractors criticize him for his pro-U.S. and pro-Israel stand.

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